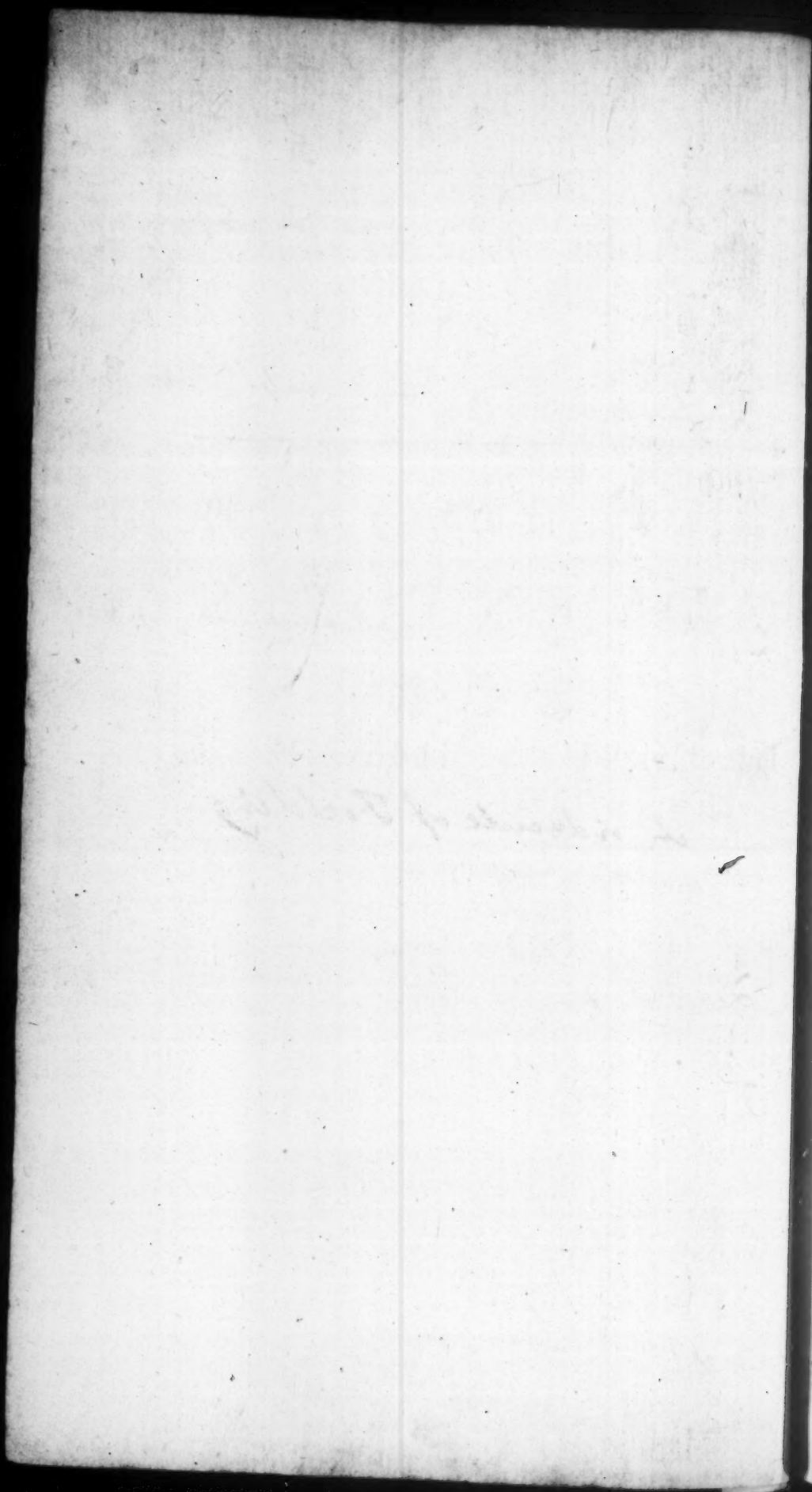

THE
ADVENTURES

OF THE

Rd. Mr. JUDAS HAWKE, &c.

[Price 1s. 6d.]



T H E
ADVENTURES
O F T H E

Rd. Mr. JUDAS HAWKE,

T H E

Rd. Mr. NATHAN BRIGGS,

Miss LUCRETIA BRIGGS, &c.

Late Inhabitants of the Island

Q U E R U M A N I A.

in ridicule of Feilding

After the Manner of JOSEPH ANDREWS.

Cucullus non facit monachum.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. WALLER, opposite
Fetter-Lane, Fleet-Street.

MDCCLI.



MEMOIRS

OF THE

Rd. Mr. JUDAS HAWKE, &c.

FOR mildness of temper, charity, affability, and true piety, Mr. Nathan Briggs, sometime vicar of a living at a great distance from the metropolis, and in one of the most unfrequented corners of the large, fertile, and free island (as it terms itself) of Querumania, had not, I believe, many equals, no superiors.

B

I

I hope therefore I shall not expose myself to anger, in taking the liberty to recommend his conduct to the observance and imitation of the reverend and right reverend, and to all degrees of people of whatever sect, — sex, — business or denomination.

This good man ever paid so just a regard to the duties incumbent on his important trust, that for the space of two and twenty years, was he never known to omit the performance of the minutest office of his function, unless incapacitated by severe fits of illness.

And though he might, without the least degree of vanity or injustice, boast an extent of natural genius, and a share of learning adequate to many gentlemen of the cloth, that make a magnificent figure in life; yet did he never chose to
eal

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deal in pompous rhetorical phrases, or scholastic arguments from the Pulpit,—quite regardless of the momentary preferments the great of this world had it in their power to bestow on him, as he enjoyed a sufficient competency to purchase all the content he desired.

But a much more excellent reason remained still behind, which was,—that he held the souls of his parishioners so dear to him, that he could by no means reconcile it to himself, to suffer those poor people to continue in a state of ignorance and deception, merely for want of plain discourses, in a dialect familiar to them, while he should compliment the learning of some few of his auditors (but more especially his own vanity) with unnecessary quotations from the Fathers, intermixed almost through every sentence.

B 2

I Was

I was once present at a chappel in the neighbourhood of the court, when a very great man did his parishioners the uncusomary honour to preach that day ; but delivered himself in so learned and elegant a stile, that I profess, illiterate as I am, though I attended with all the assiduity and diligence I was master of, it was not above once in five minutes I could catch a word or two that I understood, or, indeed, recollected to have heard before ; judge how great my edification must be from such a sermon !

The ladies and gentlemen (I must own) on whose account it seemed to be particularly studied, appeared to relish it well ; for they whispered and laughed the whole time of the service, which has made me often regret my incapacity of partaking their satisfaction, since, doubtless, by those frequent marks of approbation

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bation they bestowed on it, it must have been a most florid piece, containing many excellent strokes of wit and humour.

Mr. Briggs his private life was strictly correspondent with his public admonitions, plain, good, chearful, and without the least hypocrisy, of so benevolent a temper, that no calamity, (though even that of a perfect stranger) was of long duration, provided it was in his power to relieve it.

He was the constant umpire of all disputants in the neighbourhood, and his sole business and care was employed for the general ease and emolument of his parishioners.

How happy must the people be, possessed of so worthy a minister!—His happiness none are so able to form a right idea of, as those, whose truly noble spirits have equal incli-

nations with their abilities, to exhilarate the hearts of the depressed and indigent.

There are a particular species of men, very thick sown on the face of the earth, and the crop of which seem rather to encrease than diminish, that can only be said to exist, by their being known to walk, eat, drink, and propagate.—Every reader of perspicuity and good nature, when they shall be acquainted with the character of Jeoffrey Muddle Esq; member of — for the Borough of — will, I persuade myself, acquit me of offering him the least injustice, by taking the liberty to rank him under the above denomination.

This gentleman's estate (no inconsiderable one) lay within a day's ride of Mr. Briggs his parish, the 'Squire had often heard of him, and, by second and third hands, had frequently solicited his company, for no
other

other reason, that ever I could gather, but that he had been told, the Parson was a d—n'd sober foolish rascal, that would not take his Beer kindly, and he had a mind to enter him; but that gentleman having been previously and well acquainted of Mr. Muddle's profligate life and conversation, was ever backward to any proposal that was tendered him, (not only of an acquaintance with him) but even of appearing where there seemed to be the least probability of a rencounter.—

An unlucky minute for Mr. Briggs, nevertheless, brought it about by an odd accident, in the following manner: he had, on some particular business, been obliged to take a journey of a considerable length; and, as it was the first time he had travelled several by-roads that he then found himself under a necessity of passing, and which were extremely intricate in that part of the country, on his return homewards, he insensibly mistook

mistook his way: it was towards the dusk of the evening, that striking down a narrow lane, he overtook the late-mentioned worthy Representative, so deeply inebriated, that he had scarce power to sit his horse; there was with him a person in dark gray clothes, who, by the rose in his hat, Briggs presently perceived to be a brother of the church, which gave him great compunction, because the reverend Mr. Hawke, (for that was his name) was very much in liquor too, though not near so far gone as the 'Squire; and (as I have hinted before) it was Mr. Briggs his invariable opinion, that every clergyman's private behaviour ought to be the immediate pattern of those sentiments which he delivers, (or which, at least, it is his duty to deliver) every Sunday from his pulpit.

Mr. Hawke soon took an occasion to enter into a discourse with
Briggs;

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Briggs; he asked him, by way of introduction, how far he was bent on travelling that night, which he observed to be pretty far advanced, and like to be extremely bad; to which he replied, that he purposed reaching home, if possible, giving him, at the same time, the name of his village. Then, Sir, said, Hawke, I assure you, you are vastly wide of your road; and that, by at least the distance of eleven long miles, and farther, it is a way very difficult to hit.—This intelligence vexed Briggs heartily, as he found himself prodigiously fatigued; the which he no sooner complained of, than Mr. Hawke, (on the 'Squire's account, at best incapable of civility, but now downright stupified,) gave him an invitation to Swill-hall, which he told him they were not above five miles from, and where he assured him a hearty welcome; and that he would pass his word, he should have the 'Squire's liberty to
take

take horse in the morning, as early as he thought proper.

Variation of time and circumstances frequently baffle the most determinate resolutions ; as the case then stood, there was no great need of sophistry, to persuade Mr. Briggs to an acceptance of this offer.—And on they jogged.—The night proved dark, wet, and windy ; and now, my courteous, my gentle reader, as you and I are under no absolute necessity of keeping them company in such boisterous weather, we will even leave them to pursue their journey by themselves ; in the mean time, I shall endeavour to give you intelligence in regard to the origin and education of the reverend Mr. Judas Hawke, the first cause of his introduction into the 'Squire's family, and the methods he found indispensibly necessary he should make use of, in order to his establishment, and the better enabling him to maintain his
Post,

Rd. Mr. JUDAS HAWKE II

Post, in a house he found so absolutely convenient to him.

The reverend Mr. Judas Hawke, I cannot take upon me to say descended from a right honourable ancestry, but what are titles?—they reflect not the worth of a candle of sixteen to the pound on the possessor, in the eyes of the discerning part of mankind, unless at the same time superior virtue back their claim to it.

Mr. Hawke was the only son, and indeed the only child, of a tripe-man, who, in a narrow, dirty lane of the metropolis, had, by that business, together with the additional helps of receiving stolen goods, and harbouring thieves, made shift to scrape a tolerable large sum of money together.—Master Judas, the hero of our memoirs, not discovering in his youth any very brilliant qualifications for the business of the highway, which his father always intended him for, his mother, who was
what

what the world generally call a mighty good sort of a woman in her way, succeeded in her request of making him a Clergyman.

However, it was not without a vast deal of grumbling, that old Hawke was prevailed upon to come into that agreement.

He swore, d—n him, but all the mothers in the world were the ruination of their children. Tho' for his part, as the young son of a B—h turn'd out such a thick-scall'd rascal he cou'd not say, but she was right in the main, and that a cushion-thumper's place was the best for him; for there he might bellow out his nonsense for two hours together, and no body must contradict him.— And as for sermons, tho' the Dog had not, or ever wou'd have, brains enough to make one, he might buy as many at an old stall for half a crown, as wou'd last him his life time.—This point

point settled, Master Judas was immediately dispatched to a school in the country, to prepare him for the grand one of the metropolis, the nursery of all the great geniuse's in Querumania.—Six years that he continued at the first place, and five at the latter, might be as well forgot as remembred, except that, owing to some accidental and surprizing discoveries in the turn of the young gentleman's disposition toward the latter end of his continuance at the aforesaid nursery, it was, that both his father and mother unfortunately lost their lives. The cause and manner of their catastrophe, we purpose to exhibit in the succeeding sheets.

It was a little more than half a year after Master Judas's election to the principal univerfity of the island, that old Mr. Hawke, having some business that call'd him into the suburbs, met there with a young gentleman, whom, he recollected, his son

C

had

had often brought home with him, as a more particular favourite than any of the rest.—Mr. Hawke proposed the taking a whet to him; which he accepting of, they stept into an adjacent tavern: the usual compliments past, Hawke inquired what sort of an opinion the head master had been used to entertain of his boy Judas; for that, for his own part, he had always taken him to be a d—n'd stupid son of a w—re, that would never be able to get salt to his porridge as long as he liv'd.—Mr. Hawke, replied the young fellow,—I had a great esteem for your son some considerable time; but, as his conduct latterly did not very well tally with his former behaviour, I must beg to be excused expatiating on a subject, that cannot be received by a father with any great degree of satisfaction. Pishah; prithee tell me the truth of the matter, return'd Hawke; I shall neither like you nor he the worse, take my word for it. Well then, said the
the

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the gentleman, since you insist on't, to deal ingenuously with you, Judas, as to his learning, came on as fast as the master desired, and was looked upon by every body as a most extraordinary apt lad ; and if he applies properly to the cultivation of those abilities he is in possession of, in all human probability he may arrive at great ecclesiastical preferments, especially if he be happy enough to light on the friendship of some patron of learning, who will be so kind to assist his endeavours.—And now, on the other hand, (since you insisted on my sentiments freely) I'll give, with mine, those of the whole school, (for we all concurr'd in the same opinion,) viz. that he grew, for the last part of his time, one of the most notoriously wicked, and incorrigible youths that ever was known to have been bred there. And indeed we all concluded, that, without great reformation, he must certainly go to the gallows—but I hope, Sir, you are

C 2

able

able to give me an account of such an alteration in his conduct, as I shall be overjoy'd to hear, and communicate.

Hawke, far from shewing any resentment or concern at this description of his son's behaviour when at school, received it with all the emotions of joy, that a person might naturally be supposed to express at the unexpected recovery of a dear friend, or parent, that had been given over; or something immensely precious that they had imagined lost beyond all hope of a retrieval.

He quitted the young gentleman in the most abrupt manner, without paying even his share of the reckoning;—and made his way home as fast as he cou'd, capering, singing, and wishing all schools, universities, and church preferments, at the lowest abyss. When he came into his house, he was quite out of breath, which
as

as soon as he had recruited with a little rest, and his spirits with a noggin of right Hollands, Od rabbit it, madam, said he to his good woman (for he never swore) are not you a hell-born toad ! I'll send for the poor boy home from that d—n'd university in spite of your teeth ; I will by G—dlikins ; why, he'll be curb'd till he is ruin'd there !—the dog will grow as stupid, as ever he was.—Little did I expect to hear such news this morning ! I'll send for him home to-morrow, rot me if I don't ;——he a parson ! he be d—n'd ! In such kind of exclamations he ran on for the space of an hour ; but Mrs. Hawke continuing as strenuous in her opinion of bringing her son to the pulpit, as her husband was against it, daily quarrels and bickerings ensued. In one of those disputes, the thread of the argument waxing very tough and tedious, as is usually the case in matrimonial conflicts, Mr. Hawke took an opportunity to silence all his

spouse's objections at once, by tipping her out of a window two stories high; and the devil a word did she ever say more to him—So far, so good.—But the next sessions a morose judge, back'd by the opinions of a something too scrupulous jury, took it into their heads to bring this accident in willfull murder; and poor Mr. Hawke had the misfortune to be hang'd only for a Laconic manner of deciding an argument.

Letters and messages were frequently sent to young Mr. Judas by his father, both before and after his condemnation; but to little purpose:—all the news that could be got concerning him, was, that he was gone from thence, no body could tell whither, he having been, after numberless admonitions, expelled three months before that time for many misdemeanors;—the principal of which were getting frequently drunk, and lying out of college;—beating
his

his tutor ; ravishing his bed-maker ; lampooning the proctor ; and blaspheming the Trinity.

This news afforded great consolation to the depressed spirits of old Hawke ; who declared (at the tree) that he regretted nothing so much as not being able to obtain a sight of his darling boy before he expired ; and, even in his last moments, while Mr. Ketch was doing the duties of his office in adjusting the knot of the hempen burdash, he protested, that he died well pleased and contented, in the surety of having left behind him a successor that would, one day or other, by most extraordinary methods and qualifications peculiar to himself, make a confounded bustle in the world.

Mr. Judas was at this time what people call honourably courting a farmer's daughter about twenty miles distant from the university ; he had
found

found means to obtain the father and mother's approbation, to whom he had been introduced by their son, a sporting companion of his.—They were mighty simple, poor, honest, inoffensive folks, and consequently very liable to be deceived by one of Hawke's insinuating complexion.—He had all along passed upon them as a young gentleman of distinction, whose deceased parents had left him a very large estate, which the trustees could by no means hinder his entering, into immediate possession of, the moment he became of age, which, he told them, he then only wanted two years of.

Under the unhappy circumstance of being expelled the university (a great piece of wrong done him, as he found it very easy to persuade such undesigning hearts as he had to deal with) he represented to them, that it would be a most imprudent step for him to think of venturing to the metropolis

tropolis in the face of his guardians and relations, while they were so much incensed against him; nor could he with patience support the repeated shocks he must expect to meet with, not from them alone, but even among his more familiar acquaintance; he therefore proposed, that, if it was agreeable to them and her, he would marry their daughter Molly forthwith, and continue with them altogether until he should be of age, when he might be able to recompence them in a manner suitable to the friendship and duty he must always acknowledge for the parents of a woman so extremely dear to him.— The deluded couple came into this scheme as readily as he could wish, as likewise did the unhappy girl, who absolutely loved him, and indeed it was no great wonder she should; for his person was very far from disagreeable, and ever till he gained his point, his speech and behaviour were studied to deceive even the most wary

wary: as to this poor creature, she had never had an opportunity of conversing with any one superior to the meer loobies of the neighbourhood; therefore Hawke had every advantage he could wish to farther his project, which at this time aim'd at nothing more than the gratification of his sensual appetite, at the expence of the ruin of an honest family.—He gained his point—they were married in less than a fortnight after the first proposal; and that very day his father's fate reached his ears—but had no sort of effect upon him;—he eat, drank, laughed, danced, and went thro' all the pleasing formalities of a wedding-day, without the least visible alteration, either in behaviour, or countenance, in so true and philosophic a light did this gentleman view occurrences fit only to amaze and terrify the groveling inconnected ideas of the vulgar.

Three

Three months after consummation, Mr. Hawke pretending a vast deal of fondness for his new wife, proposed the taking her with him on a jaunt to the metropolis, that they might pay their respects to his guardian, whom he observed (as his reason had had now time enough to settle) might perhaps be prevailed on to look with tender and indulgent eyes on an affair transacted in haste, and from the which there was then no possibility of extricating themselves, but by such means as, he hoped, heaven would always grant him grace sufficient to withstand even a thought of; and that it was not impossible but he might supply him with a sum of money too, that would enable him to support both herself and parents, in a manner suitable to the condition that the family he married into, had an incontestable right to appear.

The

The poor honest-hearted old folks, overjoyed at the affectionate and tender professions of their son-in-law, expressed all the gratitude in their power on the occasion. Little did they apprehend the consequences that lurked under all this finessè of endearments! — He had received a letter two posts before, from a person that had been used to correspond with him in all his intrigues, as well previous to, as since his expulsion; the contents of it were as follow:

Dr JUDAS,

MY concern occasioned by the late tragical end of your parents, has been much moderated, by the joy received on the account of your marriage with a young, blooming, healthy, country girl, whom fame reports very pretty. — If you are not blockhead enough to stand in your own light, by being too uxorious, now is the crisis to strike, and your fortune

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fortune is made for ever; — I transact all the Lord Loathsome's business; I have the honour of his commands to sup with him at the Whiteswan inn, — Monday sen'night, where could we see you, and Mrs. Hawke, it would be esteemed a great happiness by my Lord, I am certain. As for my part, judge by my endeavours to serve you, how much I am,

Yours, &c.

To enumerate all particular incidents brought on by the receipt of this, would not only swell these memoirs much beyond the original intent, but likewise lay me under the Inconvenience of digressing to petit affairs, no way material to the conducting of the grand design — (a mistake frequently to be noticed in most of the writings of the memorialists, with whose ingenious performances the press at present is honoured, and whose numberless fine

D flowers

flowers hardly atone for the before-said weeds, with which their soils abound.

Be it remembered, that I here except the author of *Tom Jones*, who, (like Job's messenger, shall alone escape the slaughter of the critics, to tell the world, that he can spin a web to catch every fly—and, that the most trifling of trifles may be drawn out by him to whatever length he thinks proper, without the reader's being in the least dissatisfied at his not having confined his subject to a less limited compass.) — The advice contained in the letter was followed to a tittle by Mr. Hawke, who was accordingly met at the Inn by my Lord, who had impatiently waited some hours for him, to whom he introduced his wife, as to his guardian. To present ye with a scetch of the person of this man, this evident scandal to the many great and high privileges enjoyed by Querumanian noblemen: — He

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—He is about seventy two years of age, yet weak enough to fancy himself equal to the exploits of seventeen; — of stature low, and deformed; a visage, every feature of which tends rather to disgust, than otherwise; a breath, which, in spite of the loads of perfumes, that he vainly endeavours to stifle them withal, sends forth effluvias so predominant, that a tallowchandler's, cheesemonger's, and butcher's shops in the middle of July, with the auxiliary helps of *assa-fœtida*, and the common-suer all put together, would appear a perfect nosegay to them.

The mental Qualifications of the Lord Loathsome, are in every point equal to his corporeal endowments; —he was ever a remarkable enemy to truth, insomuch, that there is not the least dependence to be formed on a syllable he utters.—At the same time, so staunch a friend to injustice, that there is not a jot more

D 2 efficacy

efficacy in his bond than his word, both equally despised by all that are unhappy enough to be obliged to transact any sort of affairs with him. — His knowledge is little more than what is just sufficient to inform him, that he chanced to be born a nobleman of Querumania, and that, by right of that birth, he is intitled to commit with impunity such actions, as the meanest mechanic in the island would blush even to hear the mention of.

He is of so pusillanimous a disposition, that a boy of thirteen years old may drive him from one end of the town to the other, with a fly-flap; so lewd in his imagination, that he would attack the chastity of a whole nunnery together; but so incapable in the prosecution of his amours, that for these twenty years past, his deficiencies have been the publicridicule of every oyster-wench, orange-girl, and common ballad-finger,

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finger, that ply the streets of the metropolis. .

Hawke withdrew himself for some time into a private apartment with his wife, where with his usual effrontery, he opened to her the real affair in agitation, by the most artful and insinuating methods he could possibly devise; he told her, how infinitely obliged to her he should be, for so high and delicate a mark of her esteem; that no consideration in the world, less than immediate ruin, could have obliged him to the most distant thoughts of giving up the least tittle of his right to so charming a purchase.—But that was absolutely the case that must attend a non-compliance with the sollicitations of my Lord. — Begged her, (on his knees) to consider him as the most unhappy creature under the sun, whose extremity of distress obliged him to appear in so contemptible a light to so charming a creature, on

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whom

whom he doted to perdition; and, at the same time, urged her to consider the vast disproportion between living in affluence with the Lord Loathsome, where she would be certain to enjoy every wish her heart could form, and in the most abject state of penury with him, where, in a short time, they might both be reduced to stand in need of common necessaries.

He observed, that things of this sort were become quite customary; and that before she had lived three weeks in the city, she would be convinced of the truth of his assertion, by many examples of the like kind.—He took the advantage of her silence, when tears choaking the passage of her words, he observed her to be quite staggered with a chicanery she was utterly a stranger to, to lead her back to the room where he had left that indubitable proof of the blindness of fortune, the noble reptile I have attempted

tempted a description of; to whose care he delivered the poor victim, who had not, at that time, spirits sufficient to express either an assent, or disapprobation. The articles from my Lord to Mr. Hawke, on his resignation of his wife, were, that first his Lordship should procure him an ordination, which was accordingly applied for, but without success, his own, and his supporter's characters being too well known to admit of it; however, that did not much disturb him, whilst he received the salary and dues of the living Lord Loathsome had bestowed on him, which amounted to near sixty pounds a year; for he could, at any time, with great ease, procure some unhappy clergyman, that would gladly officiate for ten.—Then he (for the first time) assumed the title of the reverend, which, though he had no sort of pretence to, yet he found, on many occasions, essentially serviceable.—He had, besides this,

a fine cure in the customs of thirty pounds per annum, the priviledge of my Lord's table, when there was not better company at it; which, to do it strict justice, there seldom was indeed—and of running in debt as much as he thought proper, without being liable to any of those fears and inconveniencies, that frequently attend the steps of poor people, that have the unhappiness to labour under the affliction of bad memories. In consequence of these advantages, the reverend Mr. Hawke presented his Lordship with an instrument he had himself drawn up, in form of a deed of gift, wherein he disclaimed any farther title whatsoever to the person, or estate, goods, chattles, &c. that might then, or hereafter appear to have been the property of his late wife, not to touch her or them, in the penalty of 1000 l. being absolutely well acquainted — and consenting to her future cohabitation with the Lord Loathsome.

Mrs.

Mrs. Hawke, with a great deal of reluctance, suffered herself at length to be conducted to her new home by her honourable purchaser. As to her poor parents in the country, their mouths were stopped, and their hearts cheered, by frequent letters from Hawke, of his and their daughter's happy situation; and crammed with encomiums on his guardian, for his kind behaviour to them both, a trifle of money now and then too, that he procured from my Lord for them, contributed to strengthen their credulity. However, poor Mrs. Hawke did not long enjoy her miserable grandeur; she died of a violent Fever in less than a twelve-month, leaving her old dotard inconsolable for the imagined loss of what he had not in his power to gain, viz. her affections, and her husband at his full liberty to encrease his fortune by the same method with a second wife, or any other system of villainy he should
judge

judge most adapted to his extraordinary talents.

It has been hinted, that Jeoffry Muddle Esq; had the honour to represent the borough of — in—. National affairs calling him to the metropolis, like Sir Francis Wronghead, — he was sure never to miss the house, though it must be confessed he was less hurtful there, than that mistaken knight, because he always stuck close to the rules laid down to him by a worthy orator—who had too much politeness to suffer a poor harmless country gentleman to stand in need of any assistance in his power to give him.—One evening, after having been confined eight or nine hours, and it being conjectured, that the house would sit very late on some emergent affairs, in regard of which the debates were like to be very long, —the 'Squire not entertained there much to his satisfaction, and being very thirsty, took the first opportunity

nity to slip out, and overhearing a knot of chairmen very loud in their encomiums on the porter of some particular house in the neighbourhood; my lad, says he, (tugging one of 'em by the sleeve) let's thee and I have a little taake, prithee; can't shaw an honest country gentleman a pleaace, where uh may waake in and refresh'n a bit! — your honour will not care, it may be, to go into a cellar, replied the chairman, for that's the place we were talking of; but if your honour pleases to step into the coffee-house, I will run and fetch you a tankard of as good porter as ever was tip't over tongue, in a crack. 'Od dom thee, said the 'Squire, gee us thy hond,—gee us thy hond, woo't! —thour't a good hearty cock,—I do zee that.—Shaw us the zellar mon. —Whoy wauns, I can pay shote go where I ull; and thine too, may happen, if thou zing'st a zong to pleaaze me.—I'me an hoonest vellow, tho'f zelf says it—put on thy hat,

hat, mon, — 'sblid put on thy hat ; — tho'f I haa gat'n this pleaace in the house here, I be vor liberty and property, my king, and my coountry. — They had by this time approached the entrance of the cellar, where, in the midst of a large circle of the better fed than taught, stood parson Hawke, with an overflowing categorical of beer and beer in his fist ; for this was the spot where every evening he took large draughts of the alderman's lethe, that he might be the better enabled to forget the loss of his dear spouse.

He was, at this moment, displaying the strength and flower of his oratory, in the defence of a court pamphlet lately published, — in hopes, that the streams of his loyalty might, through those leaden cisterns of the kitchen, by proper pipes, be conveyed into the dressing-rooms of their masters ; — a scheme that has been
often

often practised by great geniuses, and not always proved unsuccessful.

The 'Squire, after having seated himself in a box, called for a full pot of porter, and bid the chairman call for his, and sit'n down.—After having swallowed the first quart, without once taking it from his mouth, he called for another, and pipes and tobacco.—Being now neither quite asleep, nor quite awake, as he was attending to the second-hand, debates of the gentlemen before-mentioned, and filling a pipe at the same time, instead of putting his hand into the tobacco-dish, (which, unseen by him, had been removed by his next neighbour, for the conveniency of room) he run it into a plate full of stewed cheese, that was that moment taken piping hot from the fire. This accident set the whole place in a roar, and thoroughly waked the 'Squire, who shaking his fingers, cried, Ad rat the thraats an ye aall;

E

what

what a baaling ye do keep; did ye nere zee a mon burn his vingers avoure?—doe'ft thee hire, landlord? I ha taare a pleate ale abrade here, and spoilt the mon's supper, there's zixpence vor thy pleate, and there's another zixpence for thee, to get thee zome more victuals, vriend; and zo there be an end of that.

Pearson, come thy woys hither, come and zit thee daun by I, woot? I tell thee what, pearson,—thou beest a damn'd clever vellow, and hast none of the pride of thy brother pearsons about thee; I do like thee for that, I do.—And since we be come here to drink, let's drink, I zay, — let's hire no more of this gibbrish, I ha been pleagu'd enow, alal day wee't.—Pearson, thou sha't come and live wi I, if thou woo't; and if so be at thee bean't better purvided vor,—I can't zay at how I haa e're a living in gift, I should tell thee a domn'd lie if I did; — but I can gi
thee

thee a hundred a year to be my chaplain, thee dost knaa, and that's aale one.—And I'll tell thee another thing, pearson, I'll find thee zome-what to do better than preache, or it shall go damn'd hard, it shall; whoy I ha gutten a pack of as good fax haunds in kennel,—as good a zet of hoonsters in steable, and as good a hagshead o' Octawber in zellar, as e're a mon in all our kaunty vor twenty peunds; and I say done virst. —but ale the pleague is, that the devil a saal can I get to help aff wi't. —As to the pearson of our parish neaw, he's the dam'dest sneaking dri-veling zon of a b—h that ever thou zaa'ft in ale thy Life, except it be aver a tea-teable inded, wi a parcel of green-sickness taads, that do look as tho'f they'd bin yeaten and spew'd up again, and be pax'd to 'em. Will Harris the excoismon indeed, and two or three more of the neighbour-ing volk do zay, as how so be that the vellow do taak um aver in the zar-

munt way, now and ten, pretty well.
— But pleague dom his buckl'd bob,
and his whoite mittens, a whey-feac'd
zun of a b—ch ; what be I the bet-
ter for that, thee dost naa, vor I nere
go to hire'n—ad rat'n ! he be no more
eable to drink wee I,—than he be
eable to bax Braaton or Slack ; and
I believe he'd vind a pretty tight tug
o'that, uh woud.—Come along wee I
to ludging, pearson ; and if so be that
we do peart before thou zee'ft Bum-
perhaale, it shall be thy awn faate ;
— I do tell thee it shall.

The reverend Mr. Hawke was
of so complaisant a disposition, that
where any thing offered that had
the shadow of a tendency to his ad-
vantage, he held it very rude to re-
quire much sollicitation ; — the bar-
gain therefore was immediately struck,
and at four o'clock in the morning,
they went together to the 'Squire's
lodging, which, for the convenien-
cy of seeing his horses honestly dealt
by,

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by, was at a livery-stable where they stood. — From the rencounter in the cellar, till the close of the session, the 'Squire and the parson were almost inseparable, — at which time, Mr. Hawke having first taken leave of the nobleman mentioned sometime since to have purchased his wife, and assured him, (that he would make it his business to be ever on the look-out for him) they set out together for the 'Squire's seat. — Nothing on the new marvellous system occurring on the road, I shall content my self with letting you understand, that they got very safe, and very drunk, to Swillhall, after a journey of three weeks, which they might as easily have performed in one, had not the October hit their palates so nicely at several inns upon the road.

Mrs. Muddle received the reverend with all the civility she was mistress of; and according to the ancient custom of the manor, with a

half-pint glass in her hand,—and desired him to name what liquor he chose to drink off that measure in, which was to constitute his freedom of Swillhall — after dispatching that quantity, he was to be left at his own disposal: Hawke desired it might be nothing less than downright good Nantz,— and a brimmer, in which he swore, d—n his body, there was no deceit.—Having tipped it over his tongue to Madam's good health, and returned her the glass, with a hearty squeeze by the hand, he told the 'Squire, he had never seen so comely a woman, (elevating his voice a little, on purpose that she might overhear him; and the effect was not lost.) Ay, ay, d—n her, said the 'Squire, she was well enough when she was a filly, but she graas ald and foggy neaw, I had chaice of the whoale stud, there were five zisters an um.—She was ugliest, Bess was, ugliest aw um aale, she was,—
but

but I tuk hur, vor case wy? she looked the most loikely to spread she did. — there's nere a sportsman in aale world, but what do knaa as how a roomy mare be the best to breed out an.—Tean't one time in ten that they do mis, pearson, nor there be but little danger of their pick-faling, there beant; I ha but one boy, pearson, left o'vifteen, all tother whoresbirds died in the zeasoning, ad dam the hearts a u'm, the blackguard dogs, could not ston'd good stiff brandy,—punch, they cou'dn't.—Where be buoy, Bess? where be Jerry? — Mrs. Muddle replied, he was gone to his uncle's and wou'd n't return for a fortnight: — well, well, said the 'Squire, let him stay and be damn'd to un, an he wull, we can be merry enough without he, I waan't, ha, pearson! —The cloth was now laid, the table covered, and to supper they went, upon a cold goose-pye, and some eggs and bacon.—Hawke ogled the 'Squire's lady very irreligiously all

all supper-time; nor was she at all backward to return his compliment in the eye language, of which she was a perfect mistress, by the reigning report of the neighbourhood;—but, gentle reader, reports, both you and I know, are often malicious, ill-grounded, &c. (for my own part, I am naturally so fond of the fair sex, and so blind to their imperfections, as not to be able to believe it possible for them to have any;) but I only tell what I have been told, as it is absolutely and fundamentally necessary to the main story.—Report then, I say again, doth venture to affirm, that Mrs. Muddle had long before (she thought proper to wear the pleasing chains of wedlock) born more than once those intolerable pangs so frequently felt, even by the chaste females, in consequence of those duties they find themselves under a necessity of rendering to the god Hymen: in plain English, she had had two bastards before she was married

married to the 'Squire. And since, her amours have been so notoriously public with Will Harris the excise-man, Tom Craggs at the Blew-boar—Bob Buck the recruiting serjeant, Accidence Hackit the strolling player, — and Tony Jeoffreys the shoemaker, fidler, and fisherman, of the next village,—that no one of them has been the least secret to any body in the world, but the 'Squire himself, — who is fool enough, or wise enough, to let her do just as she pleases.—Doubtless you may remember to have found it expressed in some place or other, that Socrates was obliged to act in the same manner with his good lady Zantippe, on every occasion that presented itself.

Mr. Hawke had not been resident at Bumperhall much more than a fortnight, when Mrs. Muddle, for some substantial reasons best known to herself, thought proper to make him

him master of a conveyance, that effectually secured him a settlement there, as long as he should think proper, safe from all danger of ejection. — By the completion of this grand article, he had nothing farther to mind, thanto keep up her esteem, by an assiduous application to merit it.

The serious and real business of the chaplain in this family, (Mrs. Muddle's innocent amusements out of the question) was to attend the 'Squire to horse-races, cock-matches, cricket-matches, drinking-matches, cudgel-playing, — wrestling, back-sword, and bull-baiting, and once a month to say grace at a meeting of the gentlemen of the county, at the sign of the Bird in the Bush, upon Dinglefield common.

It was on a return from one of those excursions I hinted at a little above, that

that 'Squire Muddle and the reverend Mr. Hawke were overtaken by Mr. Briggs, as has been already described. —If, my dear reader, you have not pored too long, and thereby dulled the faculties of your once bright memory, you may recollect that we left them jogging towards Bumperhall, where in proper time they arrived; as soon as the 'Squire had rolled off his horse, he staggered into the stable, to see him rubbed and littered;—in the mean time parson Hawke, as master of the ceremonies, escorted Mr. Briggs through a large hall, ornamented with staggs horns, otters, badgers, fitchets, and polecats skins, with several foxes tails, memorable for the deaths of divers horses and dogs, occasioned by the dangerous and long chases they had lead them, chases much more worthy the transmittance to posterity, than the commentaries of a Julius, or the exploits of an Alexander;—but kissing goes by favour;—through this hall, lay the high road to a small parlour,—at
the

the door of which they were encountered by Mrs. Muddle, who very courteously saluted Mr. Briggs on the introduction of Mr. Hawke.

This Lady's appearance (to be sure to a stranger might be whimsically drole,—but she was a very good sort of woman for all that.) She measured round the waste just two yards and three quarters;—her breasts were prodigious large, and swagged with honest freedom in downright contempt of tyrant stays;—her luminaries were of the diminutive stamp,—such as are generally complimented with the title of pigs-eyes, and sunk half a foot in her head, then she was what the vulgar call beetle-brow'd to such a degree, that the hair of each meeting, formed a ridge, that run half-way down her nose, and was of a most beautiful glossy fiery red; her eye-lashes were at least two inches long,—so that when she laughed, the duce an eye could you perceive she had. Her

Her complexion was an honest unalterable mahogany, and one leg about three inches and four fifths of a barley-corn shorter than the other. —I love to be exact, least on a critical survey, I might be found to have given an unjust account of any person, which I would not be thought to do for the world. The surprize Mr. Briggs was struck with at sight of so indelicate an object, was greatly improved by the lady's first question (viz.) what liquor he choose to drink a half-pint bumper in;—fain would he have persuaded himself into a misunderstanding of her for (like my self) he had always been extremely favourable in his opinion of the fair sex. But he was soon awakened from his reverie by a repetition of the demand, accompanied with a masculine asseveration, much properer to have proceeded from the mouth of her husband than herself, that he must drink it in something or other; it had been the Hall custom time out of mind,

F

and

and she would never see it broke thro'.

A peremptory look that she practised with great success on all these sort of occasions, determined the parson, for quietness sake, to acquiesce immediately, he chose cyder, (his favourite liquor) and immediately drank it off, to the healths of the worthy possessors of Bumperhall.—By this time Mr. Muddle having dispatched the business of the stable, came hallowing into the parlour, and on seeing Mr. Briggs, (whose arrival with him, lately as it had been, he did not remember,) roared out, So ho, the pearson! another stray pearson! I'll peaund the by the Lord, pearson! and zee whether thy parish wull think thee worth vetching aut,—but thee shan't be starved noither. Bess,—bid volk bring zomat to boite on, I've foind self d—n'd hungry—I do.—

These orders were presently followed by a large dish of beans and bacon, a rost leg of mutton and colly

ly-flowers, a fwinging platter of apple-dumplings, and a cold venison pasty. — The 'Squire having put on his night-cap, bid the company vale too, and be rat, vor he haated zeremunny.—The discourse of the table turned chiefly upon hounds, horses, strong-beer, tobacco, politics, and religion.—The 'Squire had but little to offer on the two last heads, more than an anay or ano now and then, with the embellishment of a critical shrug, that he got from Harry Atkins the barber and parish-clerk, of whose learning, as well as lathering, he had conceived no trifling opinion; he every now and then took the brutal liberty of a husband, to damn Mrs. Muddle's heart-fat, vor puzzling the kaa'fe. — Here it must be acknowledged indeed, that from an antipathy to silence, which came into the world with that lady, she could not suffer so useful a member as the tongue to lie unemployed. —From this reason she did some-

times, to be sure, break in on the arguments of the two clergymen.—Nor was she a little proud of discovering to them, that she had had some education, which was certainly a fact:—Mrs. Muddle was the daughter of a master butcher, who kept shop in a large market-town, and was what they call a man pretty well to pass, so that she had three-pence a week bestowed on her, for some years, by which parental care she was enabled to write, and cast up pounds, shillings, and pence tolerably well; and then she had gone through the Bible twice, viz. as far as the Revelations; those books indeed her master would not suffer her to read, because, (as he ingenuously owned) he could not, by any means, tell what to make of them himself: and he had no mind to give his scholars the least chance of being wiser than he was.

Not

Not the surprize of Sarah at the angelic information she received in the 159th year of her age, nor the fright of Herod, when he found himself in the middle of the Red-sea, — nor the Alarms of the chaste Sufannah, in the grasp of the libidinous elders, nor the horrors of Belteshazzar the king, — nor the fear of the wicked, where no fear was, (as the holy psalmist most elegantly describes it) nor indeed could all the dilemmas that ever beset the most unhappy objects of either profane or sacred history, be adequate to the terrors that had taken possession of the intellects of Harry Atkins the barber (before spoke of) who came roaring into the room in the most hideous manner ; — nothing articulate could be got from him, but, my wife and the 'Squire ! — my wife and the 'Squire ! — my wife and the 'Squire ! — after frequent repetitions of that exclamation, he dropped down,

and fell into strong convulsions, from which it was with great difficulty, the company, by the use of proper methods, recovered him.—As soon as he became capable of answering the interrogations that were put to him, he averred (with the most rueful countenance that ever was beheld) that in coming over John Brown's close, about an hour before, he had met a dead woman's candle, which he was certain must be his wife's, because she had been violently ill for five or six days before; — and that, by the time he had got the better of that perplexity, he was overtaken by a burial, attended by a number of horsemen, which he had followed as far as the 'Squire's house in his way home; and that just at the hall-gate, the hearse, with all the company, disappeared in a flash of fire. — The distorted agonies of the barber, with his firm, though simple, behaviour, during this relation, entirely wiped away suspicion of guile from his auditors,

tors;—but the reverend Mr. Hawke, who could never be persuaded to great condescension in points superior to human capacity, accounted for these sights very readily.—He observed, that nothing had so strong an effect on the capacities of the lower class, as tradition, which had prevailed so far, in stories of the like nature, time out of mind, in that part of the country, it was no surprise to him, that honest Will had mistaken the lantern of some boys of the parish, that were that way a batfowling, for the dead woman's candle.—As to the second story,—he said, that he himself, (happening then to be in the court-yard) saw the imaginary hearse go by the gate,—which was nothing more than a farmer's cart returning from the coal pits, attended by fourteen or fifteen horses, burdened with the same commodity;—their supposed disappearance in a flash of fire was occasioned by their turning down a lane adjoining—(in a man-

manner) the hall-gate, just as the 'Squire, by ordering the windows to be shut, had impeded Harry's fight of a swinging fire, which by the turn of a corner, he had just before got an accidental glimpse of.—The unravelling this mystery procured the loud laugh of the company against poor Atkins, whom though it served to condemn, was very far from convincing.—Her worship, Madam Muddle, took her neighbour's part most strenuously, for she apprehended the veracity and understanding of the whole country attacked by the sneering behaviour of the parson, whom,—that she might win over to a more favourable opinion of what he termed the errors of imagination, she displayed the quintessence of her oratory as follows: Pearson, I hir'd what the poor vellow zay'd as well as thee, and I believe it to be as true as the gospel, vor ale our neighbours ha zeen zuch zights aver an aver, they ha.—If so be, as how the vellow
can't

can't tell his stawry so well as another, why that'be his mishap, thee dost know.—Thee mayn't expect a horse to f—e oats that never eat none, pearson.—I remember there was one John Hedges a varmer in our town, uh was coming whoame vrom Bootle market, and just at a place they do kaal Baal-bridge, uh met wer a berring, (to his zeeming, uh did)—and a power o'valk alang wee it.—Zo uh stud up in doike, uh did, to let'n go by, becase leane be deadly narrow in that pert,—and as they went alang, uh did ax whose berring tware; they did aal vaal upon un, and beaat un with hedge-sticks, till uh ware aal aver — Lord a mery! you did never zee the loike; — and then, as showre as you do zit there, they did all vanish awoy, in voire an zsmawke, they did.—Mrs. Hawke illustrated her argument with many more instances to the same purport, —which when she had finished, the 'Squire took up the cudgels, and
asked

asked Hawke's opinion of witches, apparitions, fetches, &c.—To which the parson answering, in his usual ludicrous manner, the 'Squire began to wax warm, and asserted, that a man in their parish then alive, and willing to testify the same upon oath, had been absolutely bewitched by one Joan Slan, in the shape of a hare.—The tale ran thus :

At a harvest-time three years before, this fellow had been reaping a patch of barley.—About noon he sat himself down to his dinner, which while he was at, the aforefaid Joan Slan accosted him, and complaining of the sultriness of the weather, begged a little of his small beer ; — he told her she might witch herself beer an she wou'd, for she shoudn't have a drop of his, if a drop wou'd save the soul of her ; — she replied, he was a furly rascal, and should repent it before night ; and muttering curses on him, hobbled away :
she

—she had not been long gone out of sight, e're a hare came cross the field, and ran directly over his right leg; he struck at her with his sycle, which grazing her back, brought away a large piece of skin;—then endeavouring to rise, he found himself incapable, and hollowing for assistance, some of the 'Squire's men went to him, and helped him up,—but he could not possibly put his foot to the ground, so that he was obliged to be carried home by them:—as soon as they had put him to bed, they went to Joan Slan's cottage, and coming upon her unexpectedly, found her sister dressing her back, on which there was a wound bleeding fresh, exactly in the same place where the man declared to have struck the hare. On taxing her with the thing, she appeared in vast confusion, and would have evaded the charge, by placing her hurt to the account of a fall, she said, she had got that morning, in clambering over a stile with a heavy load

load upon her back. But this would not pass; they carried her to the next horse-pond, where they swam her till she was almost suffocated; and they had done it quite, if a posse of neighbours, with two or three constables at their head, had not made their appearance, and delivered her out of their hands; but the poor fellow never got the use of his leg again; of consequence being deprived of the means of earning his bread, the parish are obliged to maintain him and his whole family. -

Mr. Muddle farther said, that he himself was prodigiously afraid of spirits, and that not without good reason, for he had seen a person all in white stand in the church porch, in the very same spot, for three nights together; — and so had Harry Atkins, and Anthony Martin the grocer too; — and for the truth of this, he sent for Tony Martin, who avouched it, as did Atkins likewise; and

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and Mrs. Muddle declared, that till such time as the parson of the parish had satisfied the 'Squire, that it was safe in the Red-sea, —— he never staid from home beyond the dusk of the evening, —— was always poring over the family Bible, and could not be persuaded to go to bed first on any account (though that had ever been his custom, before this thing happened.)

To strengthen all that had been before said upon this topic, Mr. Martin asserted, that he had heard many creditable people round the neighbourhood protest, that they had frequently seen dead mens candles carried by the deceased his door, whilst he was yet in his illness, —— by a visible hand, but all other parts of the body invisible.

He said, for his own part, he blessed God, he had never seen any thing worse than himself, except the
G fetch

fetch of his first wife, who, at that time, lying so ill of a fever, that her life was despaired of by two physicians and the apothecary — he was struck with great surprise to see walking among a bed of tulips, that when in health she used to be extremely fond of; — he looked on it as the effect of her delirium, when the nurse might possibly have neglected her. — Possessed of this imagination, he made towards her; she avoided him, and looking back in a plaintive manner, retired by degrees towards the end of the walk, where was a summer-house, which she entered; he pursued her, but to his great astonishment, found no body, though she had not been half a minute before him.

Returning back to the house, in the utmost consternation, the maid met him half way the walk, to desire him to hasten his pace, for that her mistress was expiring; — and be-

before he could reach her apartment, she was gone.

Hawke could not forbear throwing some ridiculous sarcasms on this narrative of Mr. Martin's, delivered with all the formality he was master of; which behaviour affronted the grocer highly, who told him, (with great eagerness) that every thing that had been advanced by him, was literally fact; and that if he could not reconcile his belief to reports of things that so commonly happened thereabouts, and ready to be attested by hundreds of people of indubitable characters, it was not his fault; nor should he think it worth his while to endeavour to convince him any farther.

The parson begged his pardon, but confessed at the same time, that he was a little inclined to the Didymean system, in a fondness of ocular demonstration.

Oh! replied Martin, with a good deal of warmth, if that be the case, I suppose, because you did not actually see those great acts of the prophets recorded in the Old Testament, or those wonderous miracles wrought by our blessed Saviour, so divinely treated of in the New, you would give no credit to them, I warrant.

I would by no means incur your displeasure, Mr. Martin, returned Hawke, but really I must be ingenuous enough to own, that I cannot implicitly give way to every story I meet with in the Old and New Testaments, any more than I do to those contained in less popular writings.— With regard to the ancient prophets, it is out of all manner of doubt with me, that most of those supernatural acts handed down to us, as atchieved by them, were carried on by confederating tricksters, to the delusion of an ignorant and bigotted crowd, who

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who have endeavoured to palm those things upon us that were then palmed upon them. I am likewise as well convinced in myself, that the miracles of our Saviour, at least, I believe—You believe neither God—nor Devil, it is my opinion, replied Martin, in a transport of rage; it is such wicked varlets as you, that lead so many poor folks out of the right way; but there will come a time, you little think of now perhaps, when—The 'Squire here gave Martin a jog, and told him, the pearson was awnly jawking to try un, vor he was a damn'd honest vellow.—Martin's surprize was much heightened at the hearing it was a gentleman of the cloth that had advanced such principles as Hawke had done, and would fain have returned to the argument;—but the 'Squire swore every man had a right to play his cards his own way, that they met there to drink and be merry, and not to hold disputations about religion——for his

part, if he could see caase why he was qualified to taak as well as another may hap, for he had been at Maudlin a year and a half himself, gentleman commoner ; — but dam'n if he didn't think there were better reading in Reynard the Fox, than in all Burdus ditius : then giving Martin a great flap on the shoulder, bid him drink about for a musty zon of a b—h, and never trouble his head about the law or the prophets. — As long as there was liquor enough in the house, and nothing to pay, — Hawke was very well satisfied with this seasonable interposition of the 'Squire's, for he began to find that he had inadvertently revealed more of the cloven foot than was consistent with that politic plan of operation he had laid down to himself. Martin was not so much pleased; for being a downright honest man, and a great reader of the Scriptures, he thought he knew enough of the matter, to confute one of the priests
of

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of Baal, which title he bestowed on the reverend Mr. Hawke; and under that, and no other, can he be brought to speak of him to this day, (if he be still alive) and therefore levelled several strokes at Hawke on that presumption, but without any success. — And now an end was put to all hopes of it, by the exhibition of a most extraordinary personage, who had demanded access to the 'Squire, on a particular affair, and would deliver his business to none, but Mr. Muddle's identical self.

The person, hinted at was introduced by Mrs. Dobson the housekeeper; his romantick figure made a very odd impression upon the company, who could by no means tell what idea to form of him; he was about six feet two inches high, rather spare than otherwise; his face, very broad and fiery, and prodigiously pitted, or rather scarified, with the
small.

small-pox; a most hideous set of black and uneven teeth; a pair of eyes, that conveyed terror, even in the height of complaisance, and what added to their natural ferocity, was a delicate black and blue semicircle, that extended itself considerably in breadth and length under each of them,—in consequence of some late athletic engagement—his habit was to the full as remarkable as his visage, for though it was then the latter end of September, a season when most people begin to think of wrapping up—this gentleman was clad, in what once had merited the name of a white fustian frock, but now through the disadvantageous marks of dirt and age, the original colour was difficult to be guess'd at. Besides, it was ornamented with a vast plenitude of greasy spots, tears of the tankard, &c.—Nor did it receive great addition to its beauty from a large patch, that was affixed on the left elbow, of quite a different coloured cloth.—The small
remainder

remainder of lining made its appearance in ragged stripes from top to bottom, some short some long, and waved with every breath of air like the dyers remnants out of a garret-window.—He had besides, a thread-bare waistcoat—with two brass-buttons on it, and the rest fastened together with hooks and eyes; a pair of leather breeches, that shone as if they had been polished with luke-warm marrow-bones; a pair of jack-boots with no heels, and but one spur;—a hat that might have passed for a miller's, who had been endeavouring to brush it, only for its fierce cock, and the narrow copper-lace that environed it;—his perriwig was what they call piss-burnt, and its many hardy struggles against the angry dispositions of boisterous elements, in which it had suffered a good deal, gave it all the appearances of having been snatched from some scare-crow as he came along.

After

After having saluted (the company) in a very uncouth manner, peculiar to himself—he drew from his pocket a seal-skin pouch, from which he took a handful of tobacco, which having rammed into one corner of his jaw, with a very consequential air, he extracted a folded paper from the same repository, which he presented to the 'Squire, giving him at the same time information that the contents of that would apprise him of the nature of his undertaking.—The 'Squire delivered it to Hawke, who read it in an audible tone.

At Farmer Toogoods great Stable.

For the benefit of Mr. RANTER.

(From the Theatre Royal Drury Lane.)

This Evening will be performed,

A Diverting Play called,

The BEAUX STRATAGEM.

With the comical humours of Boni-
face

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face the Litchfield Landlord--
Captain Gibbet the Highway-
man—and Scrub, Footman to
the Sullen Family.

To which will be added a Farce,
Called,

The STROLLERS.

With singing and dancing between
the acts, by a Gentleman and Lady
of the town, for their diversion.

Places—one Shilling—Six-pence,—
and three pence.

N B. Mr. Ranter humbly begs leave
to inform the gentleman and ladies,
that he will begin precisely at half
an hour after seven o'clock, com-
pany or no company.

Oh—then Sir, you are the princi-
pal of this pack of Comedians, I pre-
sume, said the 'Squire (with as arch a
leer as he could tell how to make
himself master of;—to which quære,
Ranter

Ranter (having first ejected a large quantity of tobacco-juice, with great solemnity) answered in the affirmative;— Mr. Muddle then questioned him concerning his quitting the metropolis, where he observed by the bill he had been formerly retained; —Why 'Squire, I'll tell you, said Ranter —I have neither time or inclination to give you my history at large, therefore shall content my self with relating the heads of it only:—my deceased father and mother left me very young, to the care of an aunt, that lived with the dowager lady Spangle of Northamptonshire, as a bosom friend and companion, nothing less.—She presented me to my lady, who grew dotingly fond of me.—Her son the young Lord Spangle was very little older than myself, so that we were bred up together, and were like two own brothers.—'Squire, I made the Tour of Europe with him, and when I came home, he would gladly have provided for me, but he
knew

knew my temper too well to think of offering me any thing of a petty scandalous nature; besides George hadn't it in his power to do any great matters for himself, poor boy; (I should not mention it any where, but among friends) but I used to supply him with many a crown-piece, or George must have gone to bed hungry; for they kept him d——n'd bare.—About this time I fell into an acquaintance with Bob Wilks, one of the patentees of the Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane.—And letting him into the posture of my finances, he flung me a hint, that if I thought it no degradation to my family, he was sure, from the judgment he could form of my natural qualifications, that the stage must turn out infinitely more to my advantage in every point, than any place that could be procured for me of 300*l.* a year—I embraced this offer immediately, and succeeded so well in every part I undertook, that, in a little time, the

H audience

audience paid no kind of attention to any other person.—The universal gusts of applause that constantly attended my performances, greatly alarmed one Barton Booth, a tolerable sort of an actor at that time of day, but a d——n'd envious, splenetic fellow; as he was one of the patentees, it was doubtless in his power to do me much prejudice, which power on every opportunity that happened he exerted to the utmost.—His insolent treatment put me upon my mettle, and that I might get entirely rid of the tyranny of such a scoundrel (tho' it was a thing I otherwise abhorred) I found myself under a necessity of immediately complying with the offers of a girl, that had been pestering my soul out with letters and messages all the winter—'tis true she had ten thousand pounds in ready money, and a pretty trifling estate besides, of near 500*l* a year.—On my marriage I quitted the stage, and no man in
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the world, (tho' I say it) ever launched into life with more gaiety than James Ranter.—'Squire, I sat at the a—es of three brace of as brave cattle as ever the sun shone upon.

Not a horserace or cock-match in the kingdom that I did not cut as good a figure there, as any one at the meeting, but some d——n'd unlucky star that presided at my nativity, and has stuck cursed close to me ever since, influenced the minds of my wife's relations to conceive that I had no legal right to the estate;——and in consequence of that opinion, I was arrested, and thrown into the Fleet.—My wife, poor girl, broke her heart soon after—and now I found myself a prisoner, without friends, or money, and at once severely attacked by the gout, the fever, the p—x, and the itch.——When they imagined it out of all human power to be of any assistance to me, my wife's kind kindred sent two physicians, a surgeon, an apothecary, and a parson: by the

skill and care of this sapient conjunction, joined to a most robust and happy constitution of my own, I got rid of all my disorders in about two months time. And the before-mentioned gentlemen finding it impossible to reap any sort of advantage by my confinement, gave me a general release.

I then, for the second time, made my appearance on the theatre——where the roars of approbation that met me every time I thrust my nose upon the stage, convinced the world, that Jemy Ranter was very little the worse for wear ; but the inundation of favours the town thought proper to overwhelm me withal, served but as fuel to set on a blaze that rancour of the performers against me, that had for some time lain dormant.—I struggled a while against their numberless chicanries, and found it literally as impossible for an open-hearted, sincere man to make his way
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in a theatre, as 'tis for a camel to whip through the eye of a needle.— I therefore again betook myself to the country—not without some comfort in the application of John Dryden's excellent distich ;

“ The fairest victim must the gods appease,

“ So fatal is it found too much to please.”

I was the idol of every place I set my foot in—teased out of my life with invitations to entertainments purposely prepared for me ; in short, no public company thought themselves compleat, if Ranter was an absentee.

Every family of any note courted my alliance ; I had, at least, a thousand advantageous matches proposed to me ; but having once experienced the buck-basket, (as old Jack Falstaff has it) I was their very humble servant for that.

My

My circumstances began once more to put on a flourishing aspect.— I kept a brace of as good geldings as any man in the three kindgdoms, a groom, and a valet de chambre— 'Squire, your health, Madam, my service to you.—Then H—y G—d, and be d—n'd to him for his pains, he took it in his head to solicit me in a very pressing manner, to join his newrecruited company in Goodmansfields. Partly through friendship to H—y (because I knew the fellow to be honest, tho' he was poor) and partly to pull down the insolence of the rascals at the other end of the town, I came into his proposals;—proposals, to be sure, infinitely inferior to those a man of my merit might have justly expected.—But no matter for that; I joined the company.—I met with the same justice from the town as usual, and no less flagrant behaviour from the actors; however,

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after

after I had paid a bakers dozen of 'em (as Paul paid his landlord at Troas,) with a good broomstic, they began to behave something better; —at length friend H——y being silenced, or at least resigning the thing lest he might be silenced—I again retired, till called by earnest entreaty to the assistance of the patent under the management of J——s L——y Esq; who, from a due sense of my intrinsic worth, behaved very friendly to me;——and that he is a humane, considerate person, I insist upon it.——And whoever disputes it,——I say they lye.——This man, 'Squire, he put linen and cloaths upon my back, shoes upon my feet, money in my pocket——was answerable for some debts of mine, meer milk scores in fact, before I could be seen abroad ——and gave me a salary equal to my deserts (for you must know misfortunes had then beset me, which, how they happened &c. would take up too much time at this juncture) but

but I shall never forget J—s L—y, by the Lord. I again became the adoration of the spectators; — nothing could be heard of but Ranter and G—k; I need not tell you, I had the advantage of him in voice and figure——all the world have been obviously convinced of that.

The boy had some little spice of the thing about him, to be sure; how the devil he came by it, I can't imagine, — but as to any comparison that might be drawn between myself and him, 'twas all my eye! ——all dead hallow! —— He has the whole joke to himself, I hear just now. — It is an unaccountable town! —— but I shall put a spoak in his wheel, before he and I are many months older, I believe. —— A pox o'my own stupid head say I! —— for hadn't I been overprevailed upon to debauches at the tavern every night after play with the bloods of quality, and at the same time

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time applied myself so vehemently to certain duties imposed by certain females of a rank that shall be nameless, and whom I dare not disoblige, I had cracked the cordage of the little gentleman's heart long before this.—Finding my babit of body quite irregular, at the persuasion of critics of the first taste (anxious for my health) with the concurring advice of four of the most eminent physicians, I have slipped down among you for a mouthful of country air; —I have a body of people, 'Squire, under my tuition at Bowden yonder, whom, from the meekest wretches that ever disgraced a barn, I have modelled into performers not a whit beneath the regard of the most discerning of the metropolitan managers. —I understand, 'Squire, you are a sporting man, and that you have many neighbours round about you of the same kidney; therefore I purpose to bring my folks to entertain you for three weeks or a month.—

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I hear'd you was in the commission of the peace too; so I call'd on you as a matter of form, to let you know that I shall play here next Monday; and I shou'd be glad you'd send your servants to all the gentlemen of your acquaintance within nine or ten miles round, to let them know as much; if they've any heads, they'll be overjoyed at the news; — you have time enough between this and Monday; — and so here's a Bon-repos to ye all. — In saying this, Ranter filled a half-pint bumper of Port; — which, while he was drinking, the whole company surveyed him with great astonishment. The 'Squire, who had all along gave him the hearing with great attention, grew out of all patience with the liberties he took in the latter part of his address, — and asked him, with much vehemency, — What did un take un vor? — a veul? uh might come, un uh wou'd out a matter of vorm; but an uh did, uh
woud

wou'd send him, and all his ragged
a——d crew of vagabonds, to the
counto jail, out of matter o'vorm.

——And so Will Atkins does 't hire,
gaw thee along wi vellow into the
kitchen, and tell cook to give un a
fioice of cawld meaat, and a draught
o'Octawber, and let'n go about his
business; —— matter o'vorm, a zon
of a b——h! At the mention of cold
meat, Ranter (though possibly he
hadn't eat for two days before) with
a most intrepid alteration of features,
mutter'd ——Hogs! ——indignity!
——and cocking his Dettingen, gave
Muddle a look that made him shud-
der, and stalk'd out of the room as
stiff as the ghost of Julius Cæsar,
——without taking the least notice of
her worship, or any one else of the
company.——As soon as the 'Squire
had a little recollected himself, he
bawled out, Jahn, buttler, take care
o'the pleate, and zee that straaling
zon of a b——h steals nawing,——
vor that be a matter of vorm too,
they'd

84 MEMOIRS of the

they'd none a'w 'em stick at, I zuppose, if they cou'd meet with a good opportunity.

Martin and the barber having taken their leave, the servants were called to undress the 'Squire, and put him to bed; — another conducted Mr. Briggs to his apartment; — Madam Muddle took that office on herself in favour of parson Hawke.

Every one, except the reverend Mr. Briggs, felt the comforts of a sound and undisturbed repose, whilst he, ever anxious for the relief of the distressed, (which seemed to him to be the case of Hawke) hardly closed his Eyes; surely, thought he, this must be a shocking life to this young clergyman, a necessity of enduring which, he has, (it may be) compelled himself to, by some little extravagant fallies incident to people of his age. — If that be the case,
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it is a most terrible one.—But let it proceed from what motive it will, I think it my duty to endeavour his relief from the bondage of the devil, this hell upon earth! — If his countenance belyes not his heart, — there is much honesty in him, (for that seems open and artless) but how long he may be able to withstand the hourly temptations of those vices, with which I perceive this family to abound, there is no degree of certainty.

In cogitations of the like nature, the morning surpris'd this good man, who, as soon as he heard any person stirring, immediately rose, and inquired for the apartment of Hawke; which was shewn him.

The latter was fast asleep, when the former stole softly to his bedside; and perceiving a pocket-volume that lay by him on a stool, with the leaves doubled in several places; —
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I thank God, cried he, in an extasy of joy, I am right,—my conjectures are right! grace is not intirely extinct; this imprudent young man, through some unfortunate contingent obliged to bear, nay—even to conform with the irregularities practised in this house, yet forgets not the duty of private meditations, which are most strictly commanded, and ever acceptable, before the face of the Almighty.

Happily for Hawke, Mr. Briggs had not examined the contents of the book, which was of modern composition, but on too vitious a subject to allow the title a place here.

Mr. Briggs plucking him gently by the arm, awoke him. Hawke was very much astonished to find him there; however, his surprise was greatly alleviated, on his having good room to guess, by his manner
of

of accosting him, that he had made no search into the nature of his studies. — Mr. Briggs told him, he had a matter of a very serious sort to communicate, and begged his company below stairs for half an hour ere he took horse; which request being immediately complied with, Mr. Briggs left him to dress, which while he was about, a thousand different suggestions presented themselves; as Mr. Briggs was an absolute stranger (at least as he hoped) to him, and all his affairs, he could not imagine what he could possibly have to offer; sometimes he was apprehensive that he might, by some means or other, have heard of his former transactions in relation to his wife; — or if not that, some other of his villainies might have reached his ears, for which he must expect to undergo a severe lecture, and perhaps a total deprivation of those immunities he at that time enjoyed in the 'Squire's family.

Being now drest, he attended Mr. Briggs in the parlour, whose complaisant and good-natured manner of receiving him dissipated his fears.— That good man, with a frankness and sincerity peculiar to himself, told him, that whatever accident had thrown him into that family, he was a stranger to it; nor had he either a right or design to inquire, —yet as a Christian alone, he thought himself bound, and much more so by the duties of his function, not only to remonstrate to him, that he looked on it as a very inconvenient place for a young clergyman to reside in, but likewise to tender him an offer of his help, to dislodge him from so unpleasant a situation, as he dared say it must be to him, from the reserve that he had with great satisfaction remarked to accompany even those indecent words and actions, that he was under the hard necessity
of

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of making use of, to gratify the vitiated goust of his brutal patron.

To this the reverend Mr. Hawke replied, that he had indeed with great reluctance suffered for a considerable time past the enormities he was constrained to see practised there, but that he had not been able to extricate himself from them;—for that Mr. Muddle's relieving him from the lowest degree of distress to place him immediately in perfect affluence, had laid him under the strongest obligations of gratitude, to remain with him at least so long as he should desire it.

Mr. Hawke, I commend you, said Briggs, I do indeed,——gratitude is the most amiable ornament in the world, the want of which ought to render a man the object of universal contempt, be his *rank* or *circumstance* ever so considerable,——but sure, that due to our Creator, ought to be

our chief and highest concern.—
We are under no obligations to follow, but, on the contrary, we are peremptorily commanded to shun the footsteps of our dearest friends—our parents, when they tread the paths of wickedness; for the small time I have past here, I have regarded your conduct with an inquisitive eye, and have observed those shoots in your composition that promise a plentiful harvest of virtue, if the tares of vice do not retard its growth.

You must give me leave to endeavour at the transplanting you from this rank soil. You to that end must find some method of obtaining the 'Squire's leave to visit me for a fortnight or three weeks. Such entertainment as my small family can afford, you will find a sincere welcome to: something perhaps may fall out, that I may be of service to you in.—I have very good interest with my Lord Bishop of — and no sort of
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favour to ask for myself —— there-
fore —— but I do not love to make
fine promises, lest I should not be able
to perform them.—Hawke thanked
him for his generous offer, (and de-
termined at once to try the event of
new schemes) told him, he would
with great joy embrace it; and was
proceeding to a detail of the troubles
he laboured under from the impiety
of the 'Squire and his people, and how
vastly obliged he should think him-
self to Mr. Briggs for his redemption
from them, when the converse was
broke by the intrusion of Mrs. Do-
rothy Dodson, whose employment in
this family was pretty extensive, be-
ing at once housekeeper, laundress,
chambermaid, and lady's woman.—
This gentlewoman came to inquire
what Mr. Briggs chose for his break-
fast. He desired some coffee, which
having drank, he begged his compli-
ments to the 'Squire and his lady for
all their civilities, and that his excuse
might

might be made to them for his abrupt departure without taking his leave of them, which nothing but urgent business relative to his parish and family could have occasioned——then with a hearty squeeze he bad Mr. Hawke farewell, and to be sure to remember his promise.——As soon as they had seen him take horse, the reverend Mr. Hawke returned with Mrs. Dorothy into the parlour, where was a fine broad old-fashioned couch.—In the afternoon——I purpose to resume the thread of my story again.

The late promise of the reverend Mr. Briggs was ever uppermost in the mind of Mr. Hawke; the precarious temper of the 'Squire, and the insatiate fondness of Mrs. Muddle together, compelled him to seem guilty of what the mean-spirited honest drudges of the world may probably construe a little unfriendly; but light was the value that the reverend
Mr.

Mr. Hawke set on the censures of such ignorants, being well enough acquainted with mankind to know money to be the loadstone that attracts all eyes and hearts, and reflects honours and praise on the possessor tho' ever so unworthy or the means he came by it ever so flagrant; therefore, as the acquisition of this necessary ingredient was his sole aim, it is not much to be wondered at, that he chose leaving the 'Squire's, wherein fact, he had been at first only retained, because Mr. Muddle could by no means do without the company of a good soul, viz. a man that could hunt, —box—guzzle great quantities of Octawber, and sing a fat song;—at all which the parson was excellent, I may venture to say inimitable there, since all the neighbouring gentlemen voted Jack Johnson the cock-feeder not to be compared with him, who, before his talents were eclipsed by those of the reverend Mr. Hawke, had been much revered by that part
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of the country for those sort of pleasures.—Mr. Hawke, now absolutely determined to quit this family, was nevertheless much puzzled for a proper scheme to put it in practise.—At length he came to this determination; he writes to his necessary correspondent in the metropolis to send him an account, by the return of the post, that a certain gentleman, a friend of his father's, had solicited a very great man for a living; and that if he would immediately come to London, he believed it might be obtained with very little trouble.—

This letter he no sooner received, but he carried it immediately to the 'Squire, who when he had read it, (which by the by, he was near half an hour about, being obliged to spell every word almost that contained above two syllables) he swore d——n the blid o'un he was glad on't!—an I tell you what, pearson,—take Crap I do zay, best horse in ale steable,
take

take Crap, I do tell thee, and get aff,
you son of a b——ch,——get aff.
——The parson thanked him for
this unexpected favour, and at the same
time gave him to understand, that he
had some what farther to beg his
assistance in——What, I suppose, re-
plied Muddle, thee wants caal, and be
d—n'd to thee, doesn't? A little, Sir,
said Hawke indeed; for a man to go
entirely bare on such an errand as I
am embarking in, it is a hundred to
one he would only get his labour for
his pains, for cases of attendance there
are gentlemen to be feed, with gen-
tlemens gentlemen, and gentlemen
under them. Well, well, d—n the
heart o'thee, lets hire no more o'thy
preaching, said the 'Squire, take that
key, you black-guard, and go to Bess,
and bid her to gi thee twenty galden
guineas—but, dammee, I'll be paid
again, pearson, when thee beest meaade
earchb. of — To this Hawke readily
assented, and stepping up stairs to Mrs.
Muddle, while the 'Squire went to see
if

if Crap was in a proper order for travelling, he delivered his commission, together with the before-mentioned letter, the subject of which caused her to bedew her fair cheeks with a plentiful shower; which as soon as she could take courage to wipe away, she opened her bureau and exceeded her husband's commands forty pounds. To which she added a locket of the 'Squires mother's hair, which she palm'd upon Hawke for her own: as it was set round with brilliants, the parson was not over nice in his criticisms on the validity of that assertion. —All things now adjusted, but absolute leave taking, such a scene ensued, as I hope, reader, you will allow me to draw a curtain on, being quite conscious of my own incapacity to depict it properly. —I can only say, that at last, with infinite regret, (at least o' one side) they parted on the 'Squire's thundering out at the stairs feet, Dammee, pearson, dost hire? what art at, mon? what art at? hire is honest

honest Hilderbrand, quick-set, come to take a stirrup cup wee thee. ——— Hawke joining them immediately, the half-pint glasses were called for; ——— and it being a cold morning, brandy was the liquor—After each man had swallowed his third bumper, they gave the reverend Mr. Hawke his liberty to set forward, who had just sobriety enough left to direct his hypocrisy; and accordingly he took the post-road to the metropolis, till he was entirely out of their sight.

We will now leave the reverend Mr. Hawke (for a while at least) to the indulgence of contemplations unworthy of his sacred function, while we beg leave to present you with a portrait and character of Miss Lucretia Briggs, only daughter to the worthy gentleman we have so often had an occasion to mention. This young lady was about the age of fifteen, of a very fine clear complexion, a charming set of features,

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delicate light brown hair, and a genteel easy shape; she had the blessing of strong natural parts, which had been greatly improved by the care of indulgent parents; — indeed as she had been used to very little company whilst her mother lived, and less since her death, nor of a temper that seemed to covet it, it will be no surprise to hear, that she was very little acquainted with the gallant affairs of the beau mond; plays, balls, operas, masquerades, drums, and routs, were (most of them) things that, probably, she never heard the name of; or if she had, it had been so seldom, they had made no kind of impression on her; but then she was a perfect adept in those necessary qualifications, to which the frequenters of those gay amusements are in great measure (if not universally) strangers; — the family affairs employed the greatest part of her time, in the management whereof she was more expert at her raw age, than many

many from whom three times her knowledge might be very reasonably expected.—If she had an hour or two to spare at any time, it was generally made use of in reading, of which she was extremely fond; — yet never did she dip into any author, without first consulting her father's approbation of it; — an artless innocence was all her guard; — her father's disquiet on any occasion all her fear; — and an unaffected observant duty to God and him, the ultimate of her satisfaction. — No man could have wished a wife more capable of reflecting real happiness; she was an original, of which I am afraid there are to be found but very few good copies.

Mr. Hawke arrived safe at the reverend Mr. Briggs, and was received by that gentleman with the utmost complaisance and tenderness. A man less accomplished than Hawke in the arts of dissimulation, (as none

could be well more so) might have easily gained on the unsuspecting and benevolent temper of the mild Mr. Briggs ; he soon obtained, by a sycophant and studied behaviour, all the footing in the family he could wish, and more than he expected, for the shortness of the time ; for he had not been there three weeks, before the table, stable, library, and purse of Briggs were at his discretion ; every thing concurred to persuade him, that chance had placed him with a man, on whom he might very easily play any part, that he could have reason to fancy would turn to his advantage ; but before he determined on his plan of operations here, he again wrote to the metropolis, to his correspondent there, immediately to copy the inclosed letter directed to Squire Muddle, and dispatch it by the next post ; and by the time he received his answer, he hoped to have something to offer worthy the attention of the Lord Loathsome.

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—The purport of the Letter to Muddle was to acquaint him, that he had been robbed on the road, not only of the money he was so kind to supply him with, but likewise of the horse he had lent him, and that he had been obliged to walk the rest of the way; —that he was then in a mean lodging, destitute of every thing necessary to appear in the prosecution of his business, and therefore begged, in the most earnest manner, for an immediate remittance, which, he promised with the most solemn oath, in a very short time to repay.

The whole truth of the matter was, that the reverend Mr. Hawke had sold the 'Squire's horse as his own property, two or three days after he first came to Mr. Briggs's.

But no longer pipe, no longer dance, was a proverb that carried great sway at Swillhall.—The par-

son absent, all his buffoonry was forgot. Hugh Dawson the smith's son, at the lower end of the next village, was a smart youth; nor were his ideas confined alone to the formation of a horseshoe; but he could also hallow the hounds, wrestle, cudgel, box, play at skettles, and drink like the devil, (within a glass or two as much as the parson.) To these endowments, nature had furnished him with a ruddy complexion, and limbs of an Herculean proportion.—Such was the man destined to supply the vacancy of the reverend Mr. Hawke, late chaplain to the 'Squire, and utterly to annihilate the very memory of him from Swill-hall, and the minds of the Muddles.

The disappointment Hawke met with in the answer from his friend, relative to the cash he expected from the 'Squire, had no great effect on his spirits, as he had in the mean time, by Mr. Briggs's assiduous appli-

plication in his behalf to his patron, got the gift of a living of forty pounds a year ; Mr. Briggs had not mentioned it to him, till he was quite secure of it.—When he opened the case, Hawke professed all the sentiments of gratitude he could think of, and seemed extremely overjoyed, which he was in reality, though not so much for the acquisition of the trifling income just mentioned, as that it laid him under an obligation of a visit to the metropolis, in order to pay his compliments to the bishop, who presented him to it.—This furnished a very feasible excuse for the management of a plot more villainous than I think any heart (except that of this reverend gentleman) capable of conceiving ; no wonder a family so little conversant with the ways of the world as Mr. Briggs's was, should be deceived in the principles of one, whose honest open countenance and conversation promised so fairly ; yet whose life, from
his

his cradle, had been wholly employed in the study and practice of all sorts of cunning and artifice.

Unexperienced and innocent as I have described Miss Briggs, I dare say it would be a matter of surprise to every body, had she escaped the pernicious schemes of this villain, who, though utterly abandoned and lost to the sense of even common morality, — yet, by a pretended piety and modesty of behaviour, had gained so far on that young lady, as to perceive he was not disagreeable to her, which was a main point: above all things, he took a special care, not to commit the smallest violence, either by word or deed, against that delicacy of virtue he perceived she had been bred up in. —

The good old Querumanian custom of public lectures, morning and evening, was strictly kept up in this worthy family, at which time, all the servants, or at least those of them

them whose business would permit, were obliged to attend.

Tillotson's, Sharp's, or South's sermons, Boyle's meditations, Sherlock upon death, were books generally read in a morning; those in the afternoon, Telemachus,——Travels of Cyrus, Plutarch's lives,——and the history of England.——These exercises were generally performed by Mr. Hawke, who pretended to take great delight therein.——How strong must the fence be built, designed to exclude the hypocrite and parasite?——The wished-for crisis came on, that was to bring to light a stratagem that had long been hatching. Mr. Hawke had of late employed all his skill to prepossess the mind of Miss Briggs in favour of the beauties of the metropolis, which he used, with all imaginable care, to paint in the most glaring light; and how worthy they were to employ the curiosity of a stranger; that as
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she had an aunt residing there, who would doubtless be overjoyed to see and entertain her, he thought she could not do better than ask her papa's permission to go in company with him, since his affairs absolutely obliged him to return in a fortnight; — and that she might be well assured, he would take all possible care of her there, as well as on her journey up and down.—She thanked him for the civility of his offer; but declined the acceptance of it.—The reverend Mr. Hawke was one of those gentlemen that was not accustomed to take denials; — scarce a day passed, that he did not press her on that head: one evening her papa overhearing their discourse, joined in the persuasion; to which Miss replied, That though Mr. Hawke had taken a vast deal of pains in the descriptions of the multiplicity of the shews, pomp, and grandeur of the city, she had not the least inclination to leave him, and the place she

she had been brought up in ; and that she received as much, or perhaps more satisfaction, from the account which had been given her of those pleasures, than she should in the actual participation of them.—However, he alledging, that such a jaunt might be of infinite service to her health and spirits ; and besides, as her aunt had never seen her, though she had often requested it, and as she had saved a very pretty fortune, and had no children of her own, he thought it the most prudent step she could take.—Though hitherto quite averse to the scheme herself, she no sooner found, that her papa recommended it to her, in a manner that seemed as if he should be pleased with it, but, without the least hesitation, she concluded to undertake the journey.—Mr. Briggs wrote a letter of advice to her aunt concerning it, and begged her to give her niece the meeting at the inn.—This letter Hawke very officiously desired
he

he might have, to convey to the post-office, which was kept at a market-town about four miles distant from Mr. Briggs's, and to which place he often used to ride.—This offer the unsuspecting Briggs readily complied with. — Hawke no sooner obtained the letter, but he destroyed it, and substituted another in its place,—directed to his agent in wickedness, wherein he requested him to bring the Lord Loathsome, and Mrs. of ——— garden, to such an inn, such a night, and gave him all proper instructions for her behaviour in personating Mrs. Briggs.

All matters thus adjusted, nothing remained, but to set out for the metropolis, which they accordingly did in two or three days: Hawke rode a black gelding of Mr. Briggs's, and Miss in a stage-coach that passed through their village.—After a separation, that, from the over-tenderness of the parties, seemed to bode
some

some hovering distrefs, they fet off, Mr. Briggs for his happy parish, Mr. Hawke and Miss Lucretia for the place baneful to every virtue, and the destruction of innocence and content, viz. the capital, populous, and opulent city of the island of Querumania.

The kitchen-garden of fancy being entirely rummaged and plundered of all its best roots and shrubs, — to deck the adventures of the travelling heroes and heroineſſes, — whose extraordinary adventures on the road are ſo gloriously recorded by the inimitable pens of the modern memorialiſts, — I chooſe to ſet my paſſengers down, without let or hinderance, in the middle of the yard of the White-ſwan-inn, — where the Lord Loathſome and Mrs. ——— had been waiting ſome hours, with much impatience, for the arrival of their reverend purveyor. The abundance of lamps, together with the buſtle

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and hurry that appeared through the streets, had, at the first entrance into the town, thrown Miss Briggs into a kind of stupifaction, from the which she had not recovered herself, when Hawke presented his hand, to conduct her from the coach to a parlour, where her pretended aunt received her with open arms, and an inundation of civilities, in which my lord was not a bit behind hand, who was introduced by her to miss as a distant relation ; — he perfectly devoured her with his gogling wall-eyes, that were ready to start from their sockets, and which, with his yellow skin, contributed to make all who see him concur with me in opinion of his being excessively like an old cream-coloured stallion, who, past all feats of gallantry, has yet the honour to retain the privileges of his stall in the magnificent stables of his Querumanian majesty. — After his lordship had sufficiently gazed and stared

stared the poor modest young creature quite out of countenance, which he took the more delight in, as her confused behaviour and blushings were the highest addition to her beauty, he told Mrs. ———, whom he called cousin at every word, that he purposed himself the pleasure to sup with her, and his fair kinswoman, whom, though he had often heard her mention, he had never had the satisfaction to see before: at the same time, turning to Miss Briggs, asked her, if the fatigue she had undergone would suffer her to dispense with company for an hour, for without her leave, he could by no means think of intruding upon her repose. To this she replied, in the same manner as she had done before to the rest of his questions and compliments, viz. only with a reserved bow, which he putting his own construction on, ordered a hackney-coach to the door, and away they drove to Mrs.

—————'s house in B—————s
————— C————— garden, one
of the most notorious brothels to be
found in the whole city.—————

During the course of the supper, not
a hint passed, that might give Lu-
cretia the least shadow to imagine she
had got into any other house than
that of her aunt Briggs's; affairs re-
lative to her father, the country
neighbourhood, — the short time she
was to continue in town, &c. were
the topicks of conversation, to fur-
nish which, proper cues had been
received from the reverend Mr.
Hawke. — Soon after the cloth was
removed, Lord Loathsome begg'd a
chair might be called, and made a
thousand apologies to his young
cousin, for having so largely trespass-
ed on her rest, that he was convin-
ced must be then quite necessary. —
After he was gone with Mr. Hawke,
who pretended an obligation to lie
at a brother-in-law's house, but both
promised to breakfast there in the
morning,

morning, — Mrs. ——— endeavoured to persuade Miss Lucretia to take a cheerful glass after her fatigue, and now the gentlemen were gone, before whom, she said, a reserve was very proper for young ladies to keep up, — but needless at other times ; — and endeavoured, as well by example as precept, to get the better of a modesty, which she found would be very hard to surmount by any other means ; — however, at length observing all her schemes and artful insinuations to prove ineffectual against that firmness of principle Miss Briggs was mistress of, she industriously waved the subject ; and, in a very little time, asked her, if she chose to be conducted to her bed : which proposal she very joyfully came into, and wishing her pretended aunt a good repose, followed a servant, who attended with wax lights to wait on her to her chamber.

Miss Briggs was left in an apartment, where every article of the furniture appeared in the most elegant and high-finished taste. By the time he imagined she might be gone to bed, my lord, (as the affair had been before concerted,) returned, and scarce had he the patience to finish a small tiff of arrack punch, that he called for to treat Mrs. — who had been so necessary to him in many intrigues, as well as this; the bowl empty, — he stole as softly as possible, without light, (being thoroughly acquainted with every part of the house) to the chamber adjoining that in which Miss Briggs lay, and where a pannel in the wainscot had been originally made to slide backwards and forwards on purpose for the execution of such noble gallantries. Miss Lucretia, though in what she took for none other than a relation's house, from no other motive than a conformity to that strictness

Rd. Mr. JUDAS HAWKE. 115

ness of decorum in which she had been ever bred, had been very cautious to secure her door; but what are locks and bolts opposed to such confederate villainy!

The pannel removed, through that vacancy this right honourable great man crept to the bed of the sleeping virtuous innocent, the unhappy Lucretia! — Ladies whose principles were early and happily formed on the true system of modesty and goodness, and who are mistresses of all these amiable qualities I have attempted to describe in Miss Briggs, are alone capable of feeling to what an extreme agony this poor girl must have been reduced — so circumstanced too! in the house of her supposed aunt, of whose goodness and regularity she had many times heard her father speak so highly! — entrusted to the immediate care of a clergyman, who had always appeared to her one of the honestest and best of men,
and

and whom she was certain ought to hold himself bound in a most particular manner, both to the interest of her father and her own, — if any tie could have bound him! but the reverend Mr. Hawke was a gentleman, for whom the strongest of those sort of chains were much too weak,—as this young lady severely experienced.

How shockingly terrible must be her agitations on waking, to find herself grasped in the arms of a man, and one whom neither his own rank and honour, or her screams and tears, were sufficient to deter from strenuously endeavouring at the execution of the most barbarous of actions: in vain did she invoke all human relief; — no mortal came near her; — but heaven saw her distress, gave ear to her imprecations, and mercifully interposed its assistance. She fell into strong and terrible convulsions in the old villain's arms; on which accident

cident he immediately loosed her, glad of a convenient pause to recollect his battered spirits, which his vile and fruitless attempts had well nigh exhausted. — Perceiving her to continue longer than ordinary in her swoon, as he imagined it to be, he rung for lights and water ; — the former served only to convince him, that the latter, with all the ingredients pharmacy could boast of tacked to its assistance, would be of no sort of signification ; for she was absolutely dead. A Surgeon was called in to her assistance immediately, which he endeavoured—but without effect.

The first surprise over—how to get rid of the corpse was to be considered ; and that was easily managed : such searchers as they employed, either could not, or would not, find any marks of violence on the body of the deceased ; and therefore gave in their opinions, accidental : — and
she

she was interred in the parish churchyard of C— garden, as one of the late members of that unhappy society.

Mrs. —, two ladies of the house, and three informing constables, appeared as mourners; and the reverend Mr. Hawke performed the burial-service with as little reluctance, and with as sedate a composure of countenance, as though he had never heard a word of the matter.

Three weeks were elapsed, when Mr. Briggs having received no account of his daughter, or Mr. Hawke, began to be somewhat alarmed; and the more so, — as she had promised to write, by the first return of the post after her arrival in town; and he never had had the least opportunity to tax her with a remissness of duty: He was willing to persuade himself in her excuse, that his sister, proud of so charming and good a niece,

niece, had engrossed her time, by introducing her among her acquaintance, and carrying her to all those public amusements, with which the city abounds; — yet still imagining she might have spared so much leisure as to write to a father, who had always behaved so tenderly to her. — A fortnight more passed in this dismal uncertainty, when he determined to take a journey himself to town in quest of her, fearing at length she might be ill, and did not care to let him be informed of it, (being sensible how much it would affect him.) A thousand different suggestions presented themselves to his perplexed mind, without knowing which to give the most credit to; yet had he not the courage to write to his sister, lest he should find himself too suddenly acquainted with something he dreaded to know. In this confusion of ideas, he set out for the metropolis, at which he no sooner arrived, than he made all possible haste

haste to his sister's ; — but sure no horror in the world could be adequate to this unfortunate gentleman's, on hearing that his niece neither was, nor had been there ; nor were they able to give him the least information of her.—He instantly fell into the most raving delirium ; in the intermission of those violent fits, a deep melancholy succeeded, from which no stratagem could divert him ; nor could he, by any means, be prevailed on to receive the least comfort or sustenance ; the strictest endeavours were made use of to gain intelligence of either Miss Briggs or Hawke, who now was supposed to have run away with her.—That breach of friendship Mr. Briggs would have compromised for a sight of his dear girl, on whom he had ever doted to distraction—Advertisements were put into all the publick papers many days, without the least success : at length the horse, that Hawke rode to town, was produced by a fellow that had bought him
him

him from him; and so well described the parson, that Mr. Briggs was convinced that he had not mistaken him.

But no farther tidings could be got at by any means, although no invention was left untried, for Hawke, immediately after the interment of Miss Briggs, had absconded to a little farm-house, near two hundred miles from town, and in the opposite corner of the kingdom to that where Mr. Briggs dwelt, where having changed his name, he was as safe as could be; and the more so, for that the owner of that farm was a tenant of the Lord Loathsome's, from whom Hawke carried a letter of recommendation, as a gentleman inclined to board in that part of the country some months, and one that would pay their demands punctually.—This satisfied the poor people well; and here Hawke knew he could abide with safety, till the consequences of his

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last piece of villainy should be somewhat blown over, which, as he imagined, soon happened. Poor Mr. Briggs, who had been a dupe all his life-time to every man that could put on a smiling face, and whose general rule it was, never to suspect a person till he had a sufficient reason so to do, found, by a heavy and fatal experience, the ill effects of that too open and disinterested way of thinking. He fell a sacrifice to it; a raging fever soon put an end to his miserable life. — Some hours before his end, every person having left the room (at his request) except his sister, he unbosomed himself to her, in terms to the following effect: My dear sister, you see before you, in the person of your dying brother, a most deplorable instance of the Almighty's impartial vengeance, which, let the progression be ever so slow, is always certain to overtake the guilty: — the most penetrating of the sons of man may be deluded by specious

specious appearances, but with him there can be no deception. — The seeming unblameable life that I have led in the eyes of mankind, — alas! what now does it avail! — Sister, I die in the most pungent distress! — a victim to just revenge for unnatural barbarity. — My fortune! — Oh Heaven! have mercy on my darling babe! visit not her for me — she is innocent, poor dear, inoffensive lamb! when time discovers her, perhaps you'll mitigate her grief, supply my loss, and prove as kind to her as I have been. — You'll be, I think, a mother to her, — I am sure you will; — won't you, Sister? — Here his eyes intently set, seemed to imply an earnest desire to say something farther; but extremity of grief denied the power of longer utterance, at least, of any thing intelligible: then declining on the pillow, with a heart-fetched sigh, and the most piteous look that ever was

beheld, accompanied with a flood of tears, he gave up his afflicted soul to the pleasure of that omnipotent power from whom he had received it.

His remains were conveyed in a very decent manner to his own parish, where every inhabitant attended it to the grave, a real unaffected mourner. Some time after his decease, there was amongst his papers found, an account of a son that he had had by a first wife (whom he had privately married when at the university.) This boy the second Mrs. Briggs (who in other points was an extraordinary good woman) could never endure, tho' she had no fault to find with him, but that his mother had been a servant; in consequence of this dislike, the boy was sent abroad, very young, apprentice to the surgeon of an East-Indiaman, and had never since been heard of; and this was the affair that stuck so heavy on Mr. Briggs in his last mo-

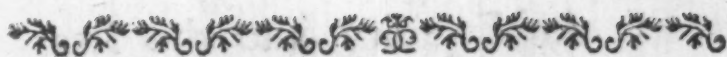
moments. Three months after his decease died the famous Mrs.—— who, touched with remorse, fell sick on her maid's reading the advertisement to her for the discovery of the reverend Mr. Hawke. To clear her conscience as well as she could, she wrote to Mrs. Briggs a succinct account of the whole affair——but at the same time, as no material relief could be had, cautioned her against stirring in it, as she could not be unacquainted with the almost unlimited privileges of the noblemen of Quermania. Pity such high privileges should be entrusted to the management of any but the real great! but providence, who orders all things for the best, has disposed it otherwise, thinking, perhaps, if that were the case, she should make the Querumians a too happy people, who, at present, enjoy a larger share of bliss than most of their neighbours, and whose uneasinesses are generally of their own creating.

Mrs.

Mrs. Briggs very prudently followed the first bit of good advice Mrs. ——— ever gave in her life-time. ———

The right honourable the Lord Loathsome is very day laying fresh schemes of debuachery with his tried and trusty associate the reverend Mr. Hawke; and he, though he has so long, so often, and so highly merited the gallows, eats, drinks, sleeps, and appears as brisk as ever; and has the consummate impudence to boast, that he does not even yet despair, by some means or other, of obtaining a b——k.

F I N I S.



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